

the largest and best concentrations of iron ore in the area was the Roger's Ore Bank 2 or 3 miles north of Danbury on the Dan River. The ore was floated down the river on flat bottom boats. Limestone was in abundance in the Perkins quarry not far from Danbury and another limestone formation was found on the edge of the Triassic basin in Germanton. There were also supplies of these materials found in adjacent counties to the north and west, some of which could be transported down the Dan River to the central part of Stokes County. A significant amount of hardwood trees were used in the production of iron, which started in Stokes County as early as 1780 with the construction of the Union Bloomery Forge. By 1800 there were at least ten small iron forges working in Stokes County. The largest iron furnace built in Stokes was the Moratock iron furnace which can still be seen in Danbury. These furnaces consumed a great amount of charcoal to produce the intense heat necessary to smelt the iron ore. Wood was cut from surrounding forests and made into charcoal. This required slowly charring it in pits 30-40 feet in diameter under carefully controlled conditions. Colliers, responsible for the charcoal production, stacked the wood in four foot lengths, end on end, to form a large cone shaped pile around a crib-like chimney of smaller kindling wood. To control the burn rate they covered the entire mound with damp leaf mold and dirt. The mound was set on fire by igniting the chimney in the center. The colliers had to tend the mound 24 hours a day for about ten days until the wood was completely charred. A good collier would make 35-40 bushels of charcoal from a cord of wood and an acre of timber would make about 38 cords of wood. Many of the larger furnaces like Moratock used 30 bushels of charcoal per hour round the clock, seven days per week. The output of such a furnace was up to 6 tons of pig iron per day, which was then refined into malleable iron in forges which made hardware and farm implements. During the time of the Civil War the forests around Danbury had been cut for miles around, by dozens of colliers producing charcoal.

The small farm size and high proportion of tenants left the county with many small farmsteads. Most of the dwellings were simple log or frame houses, of traditional design and construction. The tenant system was not conducive to large or fancy dwellings. Many of these small farmsteads were found abandoned in all parts of the county, during our inventory. Often these are in areas that are now considered marginal farming areas due to the soils, topography or access limitations. Only a few of the wealthier landowners' homes showed a greater cultural exposure in their design and ornamentation. Some of the less affluent farmers attempted to copy some of what they had seen in the more stylish homes in the county, leading to a few homes with unusually stylish touches. The Stokes County Historical Society has a historical inventory of all the significant structures in the county, available at the Danbury Public Library (Phillips, 1989). Not all of the historic sites of the county are known or have been identified in a comprehensive plan. Several of the county's historic sites are on or near sites of significant natural heritage.

Railroad entry into the county had a dramatic effect of the growth and development of many parts of the county. One rail line went east-west across the southern border of the county and connected with Greensboro and Wilmington to the east and Mount Airy to the west. This line passed through Walnut Cove, Germanton, King and Pinnacle. The other rail line ran north-south through the eastern half of the county connecting with Madison and Roanoke in the north